



NRC NEWS

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION II

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NRC STAFF TO HOLD MEETING WITH PROGRESS ENERGY ON NOVEMBER 14 TO DISCUSS REGULATORY SAFETY ISSUES AT HARRIS PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials will hold a Regulatory Performance Meeting with Progress Energy managers on Thursday, November 14, to discuss what the agency describes as a “degraded” cornerstone due to two safety performance concerns at the Harris nuclear power plant near New Hill, south of Raleigh.

The meeting will be held from 11:00 a.m. (EST) until 12 noon in the Board Room at the Harris Energy and Environmental Center, 3932 New Hill-Holleman Road, near New Hill. The meeting is open to observation by members of the public. NRC personnel will be available to answer questions from interested observers prior to the end of the meeting.

The NRC utilizes a performance based regulatory safety inspection program based upon a color-coded system which progresses in significance through classifications of green, white, yellow and red. Plant safety performance is then evaluated by an oversight process divided into seven groups of performance indicators called “cornerstones.” When performance is designated as “white” for two or more issues within the same cornerstone, it does not mean the plant is unsafe but that the cornerstone is “degraded” and will receive increased NRC regulatory attention.

NRC officials will discuss with Harris plant officials two “white” performance issues, of low to moderate safety significance, which fall within the Mitigating Systems cornerstone. One is a failure to maintain a required fire barrier between a room housing switchgear and an auxiliary control panel and a cable spreading room. The other issue concerns foreign material identified in pump suction piping in the residual heat removal system on October 8, 2001. As a result, the NRC said, the pump operated in a degraded condition for at least the previous operating cycle, from April 15, 2000, to September 22, 2001.

NRC officials said the company’s problem identification, determination of root cause and extent of condition, along with corrective actions, were acceptable in the case of the foreign material. The agency is continuing to monitor the licensee’s fire barrier corrective action.

The meeting notification letter from the NRC to the company may be obtained from the NRC at (404) 562-4416; by email at OPA2@nrc.gov; or the Web at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm.html>

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